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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this Child Development Associate (CDA) training module is to help the CDA intern become aware of the values of a creative media program for young children, develop the knowledge and skills needed to implement an art program, and select media for their process values rather than for their products. Objectives are presented along with suggested activities for achieving each objective, and an assessment checklist. Also provided is a study guide emphasizing the importance of providing young children with creative media, the developmental stages through which children pass in using such media, the location and arrangement of the creative media center, the materials offered in the center and the process of using media, the children's previous experience with creative media, and ideas and guidelines for planning creative media experiences. Resources for further study and supplemental materials are also included. (Author/MP)

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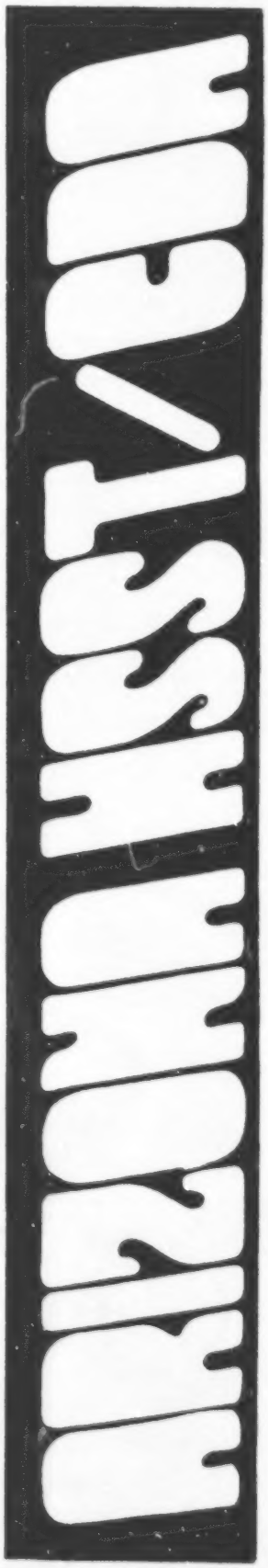

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Competency Based Training Module #25

CREATIVE MEDIA

by

Patricia Graves

revised and with new material

by

Ann Migliaro

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Warren E. Miller

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

NOTE TO THE INTERN:

This CDA training module has been prepared as a guide for you and your CDA Advisor to help you to develop certain practical skills necessary for your work in an early childhood center. Although it contains many useful ideas, it is not intended to be a self-study program. Many decisions about your training experiences are left up to you and your CDA Advisor. The activities given in this module are "suggested" activities, and should be used if they are appropriate to your learning needs. You or your Advisor may come up with other activities more appropriate for your particular situation, children, or background of experience and training.

Your Advisor will evaluate your performance in each of the objectives. S/he may do so right away on the basis of skills you already have, or s/he may evaluate you after you have done some learning activities, or both. If you think you already have the skills required by some of the objectives, you should ask to be evaluated right away. You may not have to do any activities for some of the objectives. You do, however, have to demonstrate the required skills for your advisor; you cannot just tell s/him that you have the skills. If your advisor has already observed some of the skills before you entered this module, s/he may check you off on those skills without further observation.

When your Advisor has evaluated your performance in an objective area as satisfactory, s/he will initial and date that objective as completed in your copy of this module. When all of the objectives have been initialled, you have completed the requirements of this module and have earned credit. Keep this module as your permanent record of completion, and as a reference to use in your classroom.

As you can see, how fast you are able to complete this module depends on a lot of things: how much time and effort you can put into it; how much help your Advisor can give you; how much experience and training you have already had.

The Arizona/Nevada HSST/CDA Program hopes that you find your participation in CDA a valuable and practical training experience. We would appreciate any suggestions you may have for improvements in the training program and in this module.

CREATIVE MEDIA

CDA TRAINING MODULE #25

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This module relates to the following CDA Competencies:*

B. ADVANCE PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL COMPETENCE
(see item 5)

C. BUILD POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT AND INDIVIDUAL STRENGTH
(see item 1)

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*For reference, see the Arizona HSST/CDA "CDA Assessment"

CREATIVE MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

The use of creative media offers opportunities for young children to express emotions and feelings in an accepted, tangible manner, and to develop independent thinking, self-confidence, problem-solving abilities, a deeper understanding of many concepts and ideas, and small muscle skills. Opportunities to participate in creative activities should be included in the center program daily.

The teacher's role in creative activities is passive but very important. Creative art cannot be taught - the teacher must provide appropriate materials and allow the children to experiment and explore. Materials provided are chosen for their process value - the ways in which the materials can be used - rather than for the finished products which can be made from them.

It is the purpose of this module to help the Intern to become aware of the values of a creative media program for young children, to develop the knowledge and skills needed to implement a creative media program, and to select media for their creative process values.

OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, ASSESSMENT

CDA Intern's Name _____

Date of Entry _____ Date of Completion _____

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
1. The Intern will demonstrate an awareness of the values of creative activities for the preschool child. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	1. Read Section I of the Study Guide. a. Discuss with your Advisor the values of including creative activities in the preschool curriculum. b. Observe children using creative media in your classroom. How many of the values discussed do you see?
2. The Intern will recognize the five stages of development as seen in children's drawings and paintings. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	2. Read Section II of the Study Guide. a. Collect paintings or drawings which have been made by children. Identify for your Advisor the developmental stages represented by these pictures. b. Discuss with the Advisor how the developmental stages seen in children's art are related to muscle development and previous experience. c. Save the art work of one child over a period of time. Discuss with your Advisor the development shown by these pictures.
3. The Intern will set up and maintain a creative media center in s/his classroom. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	3. Read Section III of the Study Guide. a. Observe children s use of the creative media center - how often they use the materials, how easily they are able to clean up, whether problem behavior in the interest area is a result of space or arrangement, etc. b. Use your observations to evaluate the creative media center with your Advisor. c. Make any changes that are indicated by your evaluation.

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
4. The Intern will obtain and maintain a variety of creative media. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	4. Read Section IV of the Study Guide. a. Take an inventory of materials and equipment which are in the creative media center. Compare this inventory with the materials suggested in the Study Guide. b. Make a list of resources in your community which can be used to obtain free or inexpensive creative media materials. c. Check on arrangements which might be made for in-kind contributions from stores or services in your area. d. Take a trip to the local dump or alleys in your town. Pick up items which can be used in your creative media center. e. Draft a note to be sent to parents asking them to save their beautiful junk for use in creative activities in the classroom. f. If items which must be purchased are needed, make a written purchase request for these materials.
5. The Intern will competently supervise the creative media center. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	5. Read Section V of the Study Guide. a. Arrange the center's daily schedule so that creative media activities are included in a free choice time. b. Evaluate your own behavior in supervising creative media activities. A videotape should be made if equipment is available. Do you give subtle, non-verbal cues to children that certain ways are the right way to use a medium, while others are wrong? Do you show equal interest in the children's work? Do you set up models for children to copy? Do you emphasize the product or the process? c. Keep a log for one week, making a note of each comment that you make on a child's art work. Discuss your log with your Advisor. d. Discuss with your Advisor the relative values of dictated and creative art for preschool children.

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
6. The Intern will assess through observation how much experience with creative media and freedom of expression the children have had. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	6. Read Section VI of the Study Guide. a. Discuss with your Advisor what types of behavior might indicate a child's amount of previous experience and freedom of expression. b. Make observations of the children in the center. Discuss these observations with your Advisor in regard to behavior related to creative media activities, possible interpretations of the behavior, and what action would be appropriate.
7. The Intern will use the assessment information to plan a creative media program appropriate for the range of children's experience and abilities. ASSESSMENT _____ date/initial	7. Read Section VII of the Study Guide. a. Plan and carry out an activity which has no finished product. Observe how the children react to having no product to show for their work. Discuss with your Advisor what implications this has for the importance put on the process and the product by the children. b. Make and carry out lesson plans for two weeks of activities in the creative media center. Evaluate these with your Advisor. c. Begin an activity card file. Continue to add to your card file as you try new ideas. d. Make arrangements to exchange ideas for creative media activities with the staff of other centers. e. Review lesson plans for the center for the last two months. Make a list of special projects which were available for the children. How many were there? How often were they changed? How great a variety of media was offered? f. Identify a child with a special need in the creative media area. Plan and carry out activities which will help meet the child's needs. Discuss this with your Advisor.

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
8. The Intern will provide space in the classroom for children to dry, store, and display their art work.	8. Read Section VIII of the Study Guide.
ASSESSMENT	a. Provide drying space near the creative media center for drying children's work.
_____ date/initial	b. Devise a method for children to store their work - cubbies, folders, etc.
	c. Provide wall space or a bulletin board at the children's eye level which can be used by the children to display their work. Observe how they use this space.
	d. Provide wall space or a bulletin board which can be used for teacher-arranged displays of the children's work. Make attractive displays using children's work.

CREATIVE MEDIA

STUDY GUIDE

I. Creative media experiences are valuable for young children.

A. Creative freedom in art activities encourages children to think for themselves and to use imagination.

B. Creative activities provide children with an acceptable, tangible outlet for emotions which they may be unable to verbalize.

C. Experiences with creative media allow children to resolve, examine, and clarify ideas and concepts which they are acquiring. The process of making a picture which is related to a new experience is often accompanied by a thinking through of the ideas and concepts gained from that experience.

D. Some creative media provide experiences in problem-solving. If a child is trying to add a pine cone to his collage, for example, he cannot glue it in the conventional way. He must use some reasoning process to arrive at a method of making the medium do what he wants it to do.

E. If the teacher is accepting of all work which children do, children are given the opportunity to learn that people feel and think differently. For example, if three children make pictures which relate to their recent field trip to the zoo, each picture will probably be very different. One might be the lions in their cage, another might be the clown who performed at the monkey show, and the third might be the vendor who sold cotton candy. The three children all saw the same things on the field trip, but each child placed different importance on each thing he saw. If the teacher accepts and values each of these pictures, the children will have the opportunity to learn that people feel and think differently and that these differences have value.

F. The wide variety of creative media offer children many different opportunities to develop small muscle skills.

G. Experiences with creative media which allow the child to explore colors, textures, shapes, and patterns will heighten a child's awareness of his physical surroundings.

H. Since there is no right or wrong way to use creative media, the children can develop self-confidence.

I. Experiences with creative media encourage communication between children and between a child and the teacher. Conversation about the medium itself, about the way in which a child uses the medium, or about the finished product will enhance language development.

II. All children pass through the same stages of development in the use of creative media.

A. Development progresses in a predictable pattern of stages.

1. Beginning scribbles are the result of accidental shoulder movements. Little muscle control is involved in this stage, and the finished product is simply a collection of dots and dabs.

2. As the child gains greater muscle control, he finds that he can make lines by moving the drawing instrument on the paper. Later scribbles are first merely straight lines, then curved lines which lead to simple shapes.

3. Planned designs emerge as the child begins to control elbow and wrist. The child is able to make and repeat lines and shapes, often combining them to form planned patterns. At this stage, the child's work may or may not indicate that he is representing a real object.

4. The stage of early representation begins when the lines and shapes become people, houses, or other things, at least to the child. Although the child's work may not be recognizable to an observer, his conversation indicates that he is reproducing what he knows.

5. Representation is the stage at which the child's work can be recognized as representing real objects.

B. The progression and pattern of development are controlled by two factors.

1. As muscle development and eye-hand coordination progress, the child develops greater control of his shoulders, elbows, and wrists. This greater muscle control leads to greater control of creative media.

2. The amount of experience and freedom which a child has had with a given medium will influence the developmental progression.

C. Because a child has attained a certain stage of development, it does not mean that he will never go back to a previous stage. The use of scribbling and design is enjoyable to a child who may have reached the stage of representation. When unfamiliar media are introduced to children, they will appear to begin the developmental pregression over again as they experiment with the new media.

III. The location and arrangement of the creative media center is important in providing motivation for activities.

A. The creative media center should be located away from active play areas and from high traffic areas. This insures a minimum of outside interruptions.

B. If possible, the area should be near water. This not only makes clean-up easier but also makes it simple to obtain water for mixing paints and washing hands.

C. The area should be easily cleaned.

D. The area should be easily supervised.

E. The materials should be stored on low shelves which encourage children to obtain materials by themselves and return them to their storage areas. Adequate space should be provided for storage so that materials can be organized and attractively arranged.

F. The area should provide adequate work space for the children. If there is limited space in the creative media center, the number of children who may work in the area at the same time will need to be limited or some activities may be moved to a different area of the room or outside.

G. The area should provide drying space for the children's work. Folding clothes racks or a clothesline with clothespins are very good for this.

H. Some display space for the children's work should be provided. A display area in the interest center should be for children to use; this space should be at the children's eye level. Other space should be provided in the room for teacher-arranged displays.

IV. The materials offered in the center should offer a variety of experiences for the children and offer a challenge for children in all developmental stages.

A. Many materials which can be used are things which are usually thrown away or can be obtained very inexpensively. See Module #33, Using Found Objects, for suggestions.

B. Although the possible materials which can be used for creative activities are limited only by the imagination and resources of the center staff, the following items include basic materials which should be available for the children.

1. Paper of all shapes, sizes, and textures should always be available to the children. Don't overlook sources for unusual papers which can be scrounged from printers, wallpaper stores, and the wastebaskets of the children's homes (used gift wrapping paper, paper bags, newspapers, magazines, etc.).

2. Crayons which are large, thick, and leave no waxy residue are always popular.

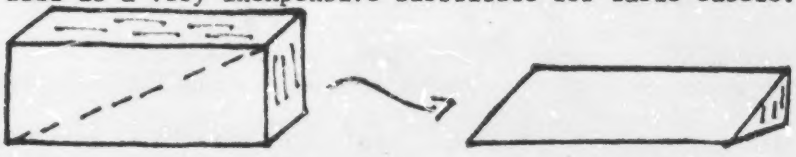
3. Paint can be bought premixed or in powdered form. It should be stored in easily handled containers. Mixing paint with liquid starch or dissolved or whipped soap flakes will make the paint thicker and more easily handled. A thicker starch or soap flake base can be used for fingerpaints. Colors should be clear and true. Use only water-base and non-toxic paints.

4. Large kindergarten chalk will inspire many beautiful creations. Use it with textured paper or wet paper for different results.

5. Scissors which are provided for children should cut. A few pairs of left-handed scissors should be available for children who show a preference for their left hand.

6. Paste and glue provided for activities should really make things stick. Homemade paste can be used for some paper projects, but white glue will be needed to insure that three-dimensional collage materials will stay.

7. Easels for painting can be purchased or made. Make sure that they are sturdy and are the right height for the children. If your center does not have easels, large cardboard boxes can be cut and used as a very inexpensive substitute for table easels.



8. Boxes of scrap materials for construction and collages should be maintained. The small pieces of paper which result from practice with scissors can be recycled as collage materials, and both children and staff can make contributions of items which they find or bring from home.

9. A collection of items which can be used for object printing can also be added to as staff and children collect objects. The number of things which can be used is endless: plastic tops from jars and bottles, hair rollers, pine cones, blocks of wood, ears of dried corn, keys, sponges, pieces of corrugated cardboard, spools, rocks, etc.

10. The children will enjoy using brushes of all sizes as well as other items for painting activities. Although the largest number of brushes should be 3/4" wide, smaller brushes should be available as well as larger brushes which can be used for "painting" outdoor equipment with water. Brushes with short handles are easier for small children to use.

11. Aprons or old shirts should be provided for the children to wear during messy activities.

12. Modeling media, such as clay or dough, should always be available. For more detailed information, see Module #32, Clay.

13. Sponges, paper towels, and containers of water for clean-up should be available. Children should participate in these clean-up activities.

14. Don't overlook mud and sand as materials for creative expression. Although these will probably not be available in the creative media center, children should be allowed to explore the possibilities which sand and mud provide.

V. The approach which center staff take with the use of creative media is important.

A. The process of using creative media is more important than the resulting product.

B. Children should be given the freedom to use creative media in their own way and at their own time. Art should not be "taught"; materials should be available for children to explore and experiment with freely.

C. Creative activities never result in a predetermined product. No two creations are alike. Dictated art activities, such as dittoed coloring sheets and "follow the directions" activities have no place in a creative media program. These activities may have value in developing small muscle skills or in concept development, but they should not be substitutes for free exploration of creative media.

D. Avoid making models for children to copy, either finished products or products which the adult may make as s/he supervises activities. Adult-made models tend to make children rely on adults for ideas and become dissatisfied with their own work. If it is felt that models are important for certain activities, the only acceptable models are real objects or photographs of real objects.

E. The work of all children should be accepted and appreciated. Children's works should never be compared.

F. When praise is used, it is best to praise the process rather than the product. To be effective and appreciated by the children, praise should be used sincerely and sparingly.

G. When commenting on children's works, encourage them to talk about their work. Questions such as, "Can you tell me about your picture?" or "Is there a story about this picture?" can open the door for a child's interpretation of his work. Other appropriate comments might point out sensory aspects of the picture, such as the use of colors, shapes, or textures. DO NOT SAY, "WHAT IS IT?" This gives the child the idea that any creation of value is a representation of something, and the question is quite frustrating to the child if the answer to this is quite obvious to him.

H. Encourage children to evaluate their own work by asking questions which will help them clarify how they feel about their work.

I. When children ask for adult help in their work, take this opportunity to help with their conceptualizing rather than with their actual work. For example, if a child asks you to draw a horse for him, help him to visualize a horse in his mind by asking such questions as "What does your horse look like? Does he have pointed ears, or are his ears rounded? Does he have a long, full mane or a short bristly one?" After the child has seen the horse in his mind, encourage him to draw it as he sees it.

J. Children should be allowed to explore fully all of the sensory experiences of messy activities, to experience the way certain media feel, smell, and perhaps taste. Since children may put just about everything in their mouths, teachers should be sure to provide only safe, non-toxic materials.

K. A variety of activities should be available for the children, and participation should be by choice.

L. Teachers should share information about the center's use of creative media with parents. When parents value the creative efforts of their children, the use of creative media in the center will be more valuable for the children.

VI. In order to plan activities which will best meet the needs of the children, informal assessments should be made to determine what kinds of previous experiences the children have had with creative media.

A. A child's approach to a specific medium will give some indications of the amount of experience the child has had with that particular medium. If the child approaches an activity very hesitantly or begins to use the medium in a very simple, exploratory way, he probably has had little experience with this medium.

B. Children who repeatedly ask for adult help either for ideas or with the work may have had very little freedom to explore creative media without adult direction. Continued assurance that you want him to use his ideas and that his work is accepted and valued will help him to begin independent exploration.

C. Children who are reluctant to use messy media, such as clay, mud, and fingerpaints, have probably been limited to tighter media, such as crayons and pencils, in their previous experience. In these cases, it is often helpful to offer activities which are relatively clean (easel painting, modeling dough, chalk) first and gradually introduce the messier activities.

D. Progression through the stages of development occurs at different rates for different children. Most creative media can be enjoyed by children in any of the developmental stages. Some media are more challenging for children who are entering representational stages if the teacher provides a challenge by adding accessories to be used or by suggesting a task.

1. When children have sufficiently explored and experimented with a medium such as modeling dough or clay, they may be challenged by adding tools which they can use. Objects such as toothpicks or sticks can be added to provide additional possibilities for the medium.

2. The teacher may suggest a task to provide new challenge to a familiar medium. When collage materials are set out, the teacher might say, "If you could make an animal that no one has ever seen before, what would it look like?" The children should be free to choose whether to work on this task or not, and the suggestion should always be broad enough to allow children to use their own ideas.

E. When a child consistently becomes frustrated when working on creative activities, the teacher should find out the reasons for this. It may be that expectations have been set too high, that the materials themselves are frustrating, or that he has not achieved a level of skill needed to use the materials provided. The teacher should make careful observations or talk with the child to find the cause of his frustration and take appropriate action.

F. There may be some children who never choose to work with creative media. Although the child's choice should be respected, the teacher should find out the reasons that the child never participates in these activities and take appropriate action.

EXAMPLE: Elizabeth never participated in the art activities of the center although she often watched the other children as they painted or used modeling dough. During a talk with Elizabeth's mother,

the teacher found out that Elizabeth's parents had always stressed the importance of staying neat and clean. The teacher discussed the values of messy activities with Elizabeth's mother, and the mother agreed to let Elizabeth wear older clothes to school and to send an old shirt for Elizabeth to wear as a smock during creative activities. The mother also agreed to take some fingerpainting materials home to introduce them to Elizabeth at home (an added reinforcement to Elizabeth that her mother approved of messy activities). In just a few days, Elizabeth was enthusiastically joining the other children in the creative media area.

VII. Some ideas and guidelines will help in planning the creative media program for your center.

A. There should be time allowed in the daily schedule for experiences with creative media.

1. The time allowed for use of creative media should be uninterrupted.

2. The time should be long enough to allow children to complete projects. Give the children a warning when clean-up time is approaching. If time does not allow all children to complete their work, simply tell the children that there is no more time. Do not say, "You have painted enough for today."

B. Participation in creative media activities should be by choice. Although creative media experiences should be offered every day in the center, not all children should be required to work at these activities.

C. Provide a variety of creative media. Many good books with ideas for creative activities are available. As you try various activities, enter them in an activity card file. Keep adding to the card file, making your own resource for creative activity ideas.

D. All materials in the creative media center should be available for the the children to use. Materials which you do not intend for the children to use should be stored out of sight. Available materials should be rotated periodically so that the number of media provided at one time is not overwhelming and so that interest in the available creative media remains high.

E. In addition to the materials always available to the children, a special project should be set out in the creative media area.

1. This special project should be planned to meet the needs of the children.

2. Children should be allowed to explore the materials freely after the materials have been introduced.

3. This special project need not be changed every day, but it should be changed frequently enough to keep children interested and challenged.

F. Creative activities which are available should provide opportunities for freedom of expression.

G. Children should be allowed to use available materials as they choose. The same materials may be used differently by each child.

H. When planning a program of creative media experiences, remember that it is the process that is important, not the product.

I. Some activities available for the children will not result in any lasting product. For example, finger or foot painting may be done on a table top or large sheet of plastic, with the finished product washed off.

J. The center's creative media program should be evaluated periodically.

1. The best evaluation is done by the children themselves. Observe them to determine if they are using the area often, if they feel free to use the materials by themselves, if they enjoy the activities, if their skills are developing and increasing, and if the work they do reflects originality, creativity, and freedom of expression.

2. Changes in the creative media area should be made on the basis of continual evaluation.

VIII. A child's work should be used or displayed in a way which shows that it is valued.

A. The child should be permitted to do what he wants with his work, even if he wants to destroy it. After all, it is <u>his</u> work.

B. If displays are made of the children's work, these displays should be at the children's eye level. Displays should be attractive and include all of the children's works not just the best.

C. Booklets or folders can be made of each child's work. These may be sent home periodically or shared with parents during conferences or home visits. If all of the child's works are dated, these can be used to show his development.

D. Sometimes children's work is used for special things - greeting cards, wrapping paper for gifts, placemats for special occasions, etc. Tell the child before he begins an activity if his work is to be used for a special purpose.

E. Never let a child see you throwing away art work. No matter what you say, a child will feel that art work is not valued if he sees it in the wastebasket.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

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SUPPLEMENT

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THE MAGIC PROCESS vs THE PREDICTABLE PRODUCT

THE MAGIC PROCESS	vs	THE PREDICTABLE PRODUCT
The magic process of art keeps the child filled with wonder — through such a simple activity as touching a crayon to paper, the child can make his ideas and feelings visually appear.		Defining the product takes the magic out of the process - the child either can or cannot do each step as outlined by the teacher.
Creative expression emphasizes self — attention to the child's expression indicates acceptance of the child as an individual.		Product-oriented activities are not art. They are manipulative activities like putting puzzles together.
Freedom of expression allows the child to discover that other children look at things differently. The teacher's reactions should indicate that all the children's ideas are equally acceptable.		Product-oriented activities allow only one correct way of doing things. A learning opportunity is lost.
The magic process allows the child to express, and consequently deal with, feelings and fears.		Product-oriented activities allow no freedom of expression by the child. Inability to properly complete a product will only create new feelings of frustration and fears of inadequacy.
The product of the magic process may be completely unrecognizable to the teacher or parent, but the child knows that this paper, with its varied markings, exists because of him - he has brought something into being that never existed before.		The predictable product is more the teacher's product rather than the child's.
The child may need to explain what he has drawn or painted, but he will usually do so with great pleasure.		The child has no need to explain his work. The teacher has assured that the finished product will be recognizable.
The child clarifies new learnings by drawing them. Allowing him many opportunities to try to draw a dog without fear of failure is the only way for him to develop this skill.		The child learns nothing by having the teacher draw a dog on his paper for him, except the very negative lesson that he is not capable of doing it himself.

THE MAGIC PROCESS	vs	THE PREDICTABLE PRODUCT
The magic process allows many opportunities for language development — stimulate the child's thinking by asking such questions as: "How many ears does a dog have? How many legs? What color is <u>your</u> dog?"		Verbal interaction towards the predictable product is too often limited to negatives ("Not that way - Oh, you cut off the dog's head") or questions with one right answer.
If allowed freedom of expression, the child will choose to work within his own skill levels.		A pre-planned sequence of skills (cutting, pasting, coloring within the lines) offers many opportunities for child frustration.
The magic process is sometimes pretty messy, but part of the fun and value also come from clean-up.		The degree of mess can usually be controlled when working with predictable product activities. The teacher designs the program for s/his convenience instead of for the child's experience.